

For Immediate Release

October 2007

Contact: Carine Decroi

+33 1 40 76 85 88

cdecroi@christies.com

Alexandra Kindermann

+44-20-7389-2289

akindermann@christies.com

SUPERLATIVE JEWELS

MAGNIFICENT JEWELS

Thursday 15 November 2007

Hôtel des Bergues – Four Seasons Geneva

Geneva – The November 15 auction of *Magnificent Jewels* at Christie's Geneva will present an exquisite selection of jewellery hand-picked by its specialists worldwide. It is a one-of-a-kind event featuring an array of exceptional gemstones, beautiful signed pieces and highly original designs. Each specialist has selected a 'coup de coeur' piece which represents, for each expert personally, the rarest, finest and most valuable qualities seen in jewels and gemstones. This unique offering comprises the following items:

Lacloche Necklace

Eric Valdieu, Head of the Geneva Jewellery Department, picked this delicate Belle Epoque diamond choker by Lacloche Frères.

*"Its audacious and elegant design makes it as fashionable and wearable today, as when it was made in 1915. The curves of the bow designs that flow into each other have an architectural yet feminine quality that is evocative of the best creations developed between the Belle Epoque (1895-1914) and Art Deco (1915-1935) periods. This perfect balance of boldness and finesse is not surprising for a jewel created by **Lacloche Frères**, a small family firm that once rivalled with the likes of Cartier and Van Cleef & Arpels. To find an example of their work in such perfect condition, in the original fitted case with the inscription Lacloche Frères, Paris, Nice, Aix-les-Bains, is not only reminiscent of a bygone era but also a rare*



opportunity to admire a truly timeless design. Any woman who is privileged to wear this exquisite choker can only radiate with beauty and this is what jewellery is all about.”

A Belle Epoque diamond necklace, by Lacloche Frères

Designed as thirteen graduating interlaced old-cut diamond ribbons, each centering on an old-cut diamond, circa 1910

Estimate: Sfr 60,000 - 80,000 / \$ 48,000 - 65,000

Pink Golconda Diamond

Another highlight of the series is a breathtaking antique fancy light orangy-pink diamond, weighing 11.57 carats chosen by **Geneva Senior Specialist Jean-Marc Lunel**.

“In the past years few Golconda coloured diamonds have been seen on the market. Christie's has had the pleasure of offering some of the most beautiful examples. This superb diamond conjures up every quality that make the Golconda diamonds so sought-after. Its peach blossom colour combined with its crystalline appeal and its beautiful Antique flat octagonal-shape make it an exceptionnal stone which should be considered as a collector's gem”

It is believed that diamond mining began in India during the 4th century BC. Diamonds were found in the eastern part of the country which was the only source of diamonds for about 2000 years, until new mines were discovered in Brazil in 1725 and then in South Africa in 1866. However, the famous Golconda mines were renowned to have produced the best quality diamonds and most historic stones.

Golconda conjures up the mystery of India and the marvellous stories related to the city of Hyderabad.

From the time of the ancient Rajas and Sultans to the reign of the Nizams, diamond mining activity enlivened the heart of the city. Chemically pure, Golconda diamonds are limpid and have a very high degree of transparency and whiteness, setting them apart from all other diamonds.



An antique coloured diamond ring - The octagonal-shaped diamond of 11.57 carats, circa 1900

Estimate: Sfr 80,000 - 120,000 / \$ 100,000 - 150,000

For **Helen Molesworth, Specialist in the Geneva Jewellery Department**, the superlative jewel is an Alexandrite necklace.



“Alexandrite is a magical and enchanting gemstone. In the world of natural gems, it is arguably one of the most intriguing finds. First unearthed in Russia in the 1830s, the mineral astounded geologists with its almost unique optical ‘colour-change’ property, switching from raspberry-red to emerald-green dependent on incident light. While the original deposits from Russia were a marvel at the time, and are still greatly treasured for their rarity, those more recently unearthed in Brazil are truly sensational. The newer material exhibits a fabulous vivid turquoise-green to deep amethyst-purple colour change, and this necklace is a superbly well-matched group of the finest specimens. Alexandrite is, to me,

the most aesthetically beautiful, scientifically interesting, and historically fascinating gemstone; and as a jewel, this is an exceptional collection of such sophisticated gems.”

The 8.86 ct natural alexandrite possesses a very high degree of transparency, combined with a strong colour-change effect, from bluish-green when viewed in daylight to purple upon exposure to incandescent light. The alexandrite of the Hematita region in the Minas Gerais State of Brazil were first discovered during 1987 and quickly gained high international acclaim for the outstanding degree of colour-change exhibited by these extraordinary gems. Such a combination of high clarity and strong colour-change effect, in a Brazilian alexandrite is rare.

An impressive alexandrite pendant necklace

The detachable alexandrite pendant, set with a cushion-shaped alexandrite, weighing 8.86 carats, mounted in platinum, 40.0 cm long

Estimate: Sfr 500,000 - 750,000 / \$ 400,000 - 600,000

Windsor Pearl Ring

“In Sanskrit, an ancient language of India, the pearl is known as ‘sasi-ratna’ or ‘gem of the moon’ and the Royal Treasuries of the Maharajah’s of India were known to overflow with pearls from the Persian Gulf. Understated, rare and exquisite, this beautiful gem has always held favor amongst Royalty throughout the ages. It is only natural then that one would find a fine pearl in the collection of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Not only was their jewelry collected with great taste and style but they almost only acquired jewels that were painstakingly crafted in the finest workshop in the world, the house of Cartier being one of the best. This ring represents true class both in the



gem that it holds and also the hands that it was made for” **declared Rahul Kadakia, Director of the New York Jewellery Department**

An elegant natural pearl and diamond ring, by Cartier (Previouslyly the property of the Duchess of Windsor)
Set with a natural pearl, measuring between 18.2 and 17.9 mm, to the plaited gold and pavé-set diamond border, on a fluted gold band, made in 1964,

Estimate: Sfr 200,000 - 300,000 / US\$ 160,000 - 240,000



JAR Ear Clips

“Uniqueness of design, each made only once, superior craftsmanship, and a singular sense of color, these are the hallmarks of JAR jewels. Each jewel he creates reflects the spirit and personality of the individual who it is commissioned for, yet these earrings have universal appeal. The 'perfect' blue Paraiba tourmalines evocative of crystal waters and summer skies will subtly illuminate the face of any women who wears them”, **said Emma Checkley, Head of the Jewellery Department, Paris**

Pair of exquisite tourmaline and diamond ear clips, by JAR

Each designed as a pavé-set tourmaline shield, centering upon a cushion-shaped green tourmaline, to the single-cut diamond border

Estimate: Sfr 50,000 - 75,000 / \$ 40,000 - 60,000

Red Diamond

For **Vickie Sek, Director of the Hong Kong Jewellery Department**, the red diamond has always been special to her.



“In 1987 Christie's sold on April 28th in New York a circular-cut purplish red diamond of 0.95 carats for a world record price of \$1m per carat. I remember being in awe of this record and could not imagine how any diamond, especially one that was not even a carat, could make such a great price. I then joined Christie's Hong Kong in 1994 and since then have come to appreciate the rarity of all great gems but, the red

diamond has always been special to me. In May 2000, we offered at Christie's Hong Kong a beautiful oval-cut purplish red diamond of just 0.59 carats which realized \$445,000 per carat and then again in May 2001, a rectangular-cut fancy red gem of 0.73 carats which achieved \$536,000 per carat. Both times, I was immensely proud to have handled my very own red diamonds. The sale of the octagonal-shaped fancy purplish-red diamond, weighing 2.26 carats marks yet another high point in my association with red diamonds

during my career at Christie's. Not only is it the largest red diamond to appear for sale at auction but its special cut and richly saturated colour make it the ideal gem for the ultimate gem connoisseur.”

A very rare coloured diamond ring

Set with a modified octagonal-shaped fancy purplish red diamond, weighing 2.26 carats

Estimate: Sfr 1,500,000 - 1,875,000 / \$ 1,200,000 - 1,500,000

A rare antique diamond ducal ‘Couronne’

“Christie's have been long associated with the sale of Royal and Noble jewels, since the first jewellery auction in 1795 of the collection of Madame du Barry to the private collection of HRH The Princess Margaret in 2006. Crowns and tiaras in particular have always had a special aura with jewellery collectors, from the United States all the way to China, as the ultimate symbol of the highest form of jewellery. They are often not only the most impressively and elegantly designed jewels, but usually also carry a fascinating history. They conjure images of fairytale princesses and a bygone era, while exemplifying the best craftsmanship of their time. Whenever an important crown or tiara appears on the market, it automatically becomes



"the jewel" of the sale, not only attracting the imagination of all jewellery lovers, but also recently realising the prices they deserve. In November 2005 in Geneva, Christie's sold the most expensive crown ever, an extraordinary coloured diamond, pearl and ruby headpiece, for \$6.1 million, and in June 2007 in London, a world record price for a tiara was achieved with a magnificent example by Fabergé, from the collection of Princess Maria Gabriella di Savoia, which sold for \$1.7 million” **said Raymond Sancroft-Baker, Director of the London Jewellery Department.**

Designed as an enclosed circlet of oval and lozenge-shaped old-cut diamond plaques between openwork foliate motifs, it is surmounted by swags supporting eight diamond-set strawberry leaves between cushion-shaped diamond spacers, circa 1890.

Estimate: Sfr 620,000 -1,000,000 / \$ 500,000 - 800,000

Auction:

Thursday 15 November at 10.30 am, 2.30 pm and 7.30 pm

Exhibition:

Hôtel des Bergues – Four Seasons Geneva: 10 to 14 November 2007

###

Images available upon request

www.christies.com